

## Senate Resolution 746

By: Senators Thomas of the 2nd and Johnson of the 1st

## A RESOLUTION

1 Recognizing and congratulating First Bryan Baptist Church on the occasion of its 220th  
2 anniversary; and for other purposes.

3 WHEREAS, First Bryan Baptist Church will honor its 220th anniversary through a five-day  
4 ministry series, "220 Years of Meeting the Challenges of The Great Commission"; and

5 WHEREAS, the church was founded in 1788 and sits on its original site at 575 West Bryan  
6 Street, Savannah, Georgia; and

7 WHEREAS, Andrew Bryan was one of the most significant religious leaders of his time, and  
8 in 1788, he was ordained a minister; and

9 WHEREAS, Reverend Bryan bought the land where First Bryan Baptist Church currently  
10 stands for \$150 in 1793; and

11 WHEREAS, the church's name later changed to First African Baptist and then to Third  
12 African Baptist after a schism split the congregation in 1832; and

13 WHEREAS, in 1867, the church was renamed First Bryan Baptist in honor of its founder;  
14 and

15 WHEREAS, First Bryan Baptist Church claims significance as sitting on the oldest piece of  
16 church property continuously owned by a black congregation in the United States; and

17 WHEREAS, several other notable events surround the church's history: it is one of the local  
18 black congregations with ties to Georgia Liele, a black pastor who preached on plantations  
19 along the Savannah river; a church trustee and pastor traveled to Virginia in 1862 and  
20 returned with a draft of the Emancipation Proclamation; and through most of the 20th

1 century, the church was the spiritual home of the famed civil rights leader, W. W. Law, who  
2 served the church as a Sunday school teacher and Boy Scout leader; and

3 WHEREAS, for the Reverend Edward L. Ellis, the church's greatest pride is its service to the  
4 Yamacraw Village public housing community, and he feels that God has placed the church  
5 in this particular spot for a specific purpose to reach out to those living in Yamacraw Village.

6 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE that the members of this body  
7 commend and recognize First Bryan Baptist Church on the occasion of its 220th anniversary.

8 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Secretary of the Senate is authorized and directed  
9 to transmit an appropriate copy of this resolution to Reverend Edward L. Ellis.